

St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Capitol Hill, Washington, DC

Vestry Resolution on Same Sex Marriage

WHEREAS, St. Mark's Capitol Hill has an established tradition of openness and inclusion of all people, without regard to sexual orientation; and,

WHEREAS, in the early 1960s, St. Mark's served as a meeting site of the local chapter of the Mattachine Society, one of the earliest gay rights groups in the United States, and,

WHEREAS, our parish community is blessed with the presence of people of all genders and sexual orientations in committed relationships, and,

WHEREAS, in July, 1999, St. Mark's, after an extensive parish-wide period of reflection and discussion, established a policy in support of the blessing of same sex unions; and,

WHEREAS, our clergy has in the past and continues to perform such blessings; and,

WHEREAS, its 75th General Convention in 2006 reaffirmed The Episcopal Church's historical support of gay and lesbian persons as children of God and entitled to full civil rights; and,

WHEREAS, our parish community is blessed with children being raised in "two Mom" or "two Dad" families whom, we believe, should enjoy the same legal protections, economic stability, and emotional security enjoyed by children being raised in traditional "one Mom/one Dad" families; and,

WHEREAS, our evolving understanding of the nature of marriage calls us to re-examine for whom marriage is sanctioned; and,

WHEREAS, past leaders of the parish have spoken publicly on issues of civil and human rights, including the rights of people of all sexual orientations; and,

WHEREAS, the Rector and the Vestry invited members of the parish to engage in a dialogue on issues related to same sex marriage, including whether St. Mark's should take a public position on the legalization of same sex marriage; and,

WHEREAS, members of the parish, through individual communications and participation in a "town hall meeting" have expressed their views on these matters;

Now, THEREFORE, we, the members of the Vestry of St. Mark's Capitol Hill do hereby:

Declare the support of the Vestry of St. Mark's for the legalization of same sex marriage; and,

Support our clergy and elected lay leadership in speaking publicly, at their discretion, to make known this position.

Resolved this 18th day of October 2009.